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Japan to send delegation for talks on policy

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - Japan will send a high-powered delegation to Malaysia to hold talks on how best to expand the scope of the Look East policy to keep up with changing times and make it more successful.

Its ambassador to Malaysia, Issei Nomura, said although the Look East policy, implemented in the early 80s, had been successful, it needed to be expanded to cover more issues.

"Malaysia has changed a lot in the last 10 years. The policy's current stress on manufacturing and agriculture should be expanded to cover Information Technology and the services industry," he said today after attending the opening of a seminar at the International Youth Centre.

The Japanese delegation comprising officials from the country's Education and Foreign Affairs Ministries will arrive on Thursday.

Among the matters to be discussed is the fostering of more and closer co-operation between the two governments and its private sectors.

Nomura said Malaysia should also consider sending students for post-graduate studies in Japan and develop twinning programmes with Japanese universities.

Currently, students are being sent to Japan for undergraduate studies with many of them undergoing matriculation programmes at Universiti Malaya.

The Look East policy, introduced by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has seen more collaboration between Malaysian and Japanese companies particularly in the areas of training and heavy industries like car manufacturing.

This had among others, resulted in the birth of the Malaysian-made Proton cars, employing the technical expertise of Japan-trained Malaysian engineers.

Malaysia has previously expressed its commitment to continue sending students to Japan its Look East policy until 2000.

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